

REGULATION

HEALTH SCIENCES RESEARCH UNIT: NURSING (UICISA: E)

Preamble

On December 17, 2001, the representatives of the Nursing School of Ângelo da Fonseca (ESEAF) and the Nursing School Bissaya Barreto (ESEBB) signed a cooperation agreement to merge both institutions. The creation of a research unit was considered a joint project and an enabler of the merger process. In January 2002, after a period of joint preparation, a group of teachers from the two schools submitted a pre-application form for a research unit to the Portuguese Foundation for Science and Technology (FCT). In the same year, the application for the Health Sciences Research Unit: Nursing Domain (UICISA-dE) was submitted to the FCT within the framework of the Multiannual Funding Program for Research and Development (R&D) Units. In 2010, the Research Unit changed its name to Health Sciences Research Unit: Nursing (UICISA: E).

The Terms of Reference for the Research Unit were signed on April 22, 2002, with an effective date of March 4, 2002, by the representatives of the two host institutions, Professor Aníbal Custódio dos Santos and Professor Delmina dos Anjos Moreira, and the researcher in charge of the project, Professor Manuel Alves Rodrigues.

The UICISA: E has been evaluated, accredited, and funded by the FCT in every assessment process since 2004.

Recognizing that it was strategic for the development of nursing sciences to have a nursing research unit in Portugal that could go beyond the walls of a single academy and bring together a large number of researchers from different schools, the UICISA: E included the creation of a network of clusters in its development policy. Thus, from 2014 onwards, the ESEnFC challenged several nursing schools to

consider becoming UICISA: E/ESEnC clusters.

In line with this strategy, UICISA: E clusters have been created at the School of Nursing of the University of Minho (2014 - current), the Health School of the Polytechnic Institute of Viseu (2018 - current), the Health School of the Polytechnic Institute of Viana do Castelo (2018 - current), the School of Health of the Polytechnic Institute of Bragança (2018 - 2023), the School of Health of CHUC (currently under the name ULS Coimbra; 2018 - current), and the School of Health Sciences of the University of Algarve (2018 - 2021).

The UICISA: E has its own regulation, which must comply with the requirements of the FCT for its accreditation (Art. 69(6) of the ESEnC Statutes published in Diário da República, 2nd series - No. 185 - September 24, 2008).

1. DESIGNATION AND NATURE

The UICISA: E is a differentiated unit of the ESEnC (Art. 66 of ESEnC Statutes, published in the Portuguese Official Gazette, 2nd Series, No. 185 – September 24, 2008), accredited by the Portuguese Foundation for Science and Technology (FCT). It pursues specific objectives and contributes to the mission of its main management institution, the ESEnC, and other management and participating institutions.

The UICISA: E has established itself as an internationally accredited research center of excellence, demonstrating the importance of research in the specific field of nursing for innovation and health gains. In addition to its distinguished role and recognized merit in Portugal, the UICISA: E maintains ongoing cooperation among researchers and partnerships with leading national and international research centers.

2. MISSION

The UICISA: E aims to develop interdisciplinary research, innovation, dissemination, and knowledge transfer activities in nursing and health sciences in a sustainable and socially responsible manner, at both national and international levels, to inform health policies and care that respond to complex challenges in health promotion, disease prevention, and the transitions experienced by individuals, families, and communities throughout the life cycle.

In addition to its distinguished role and recognized merit in Portugal, the UICISA: E maintains ongoing cooperation among researchers and partnerships with leading national and international research centers.

3. VISION

The UICISA: E is a research center of excellence that is nationally and internationally recognized for advancing nursing knowledge and improving the health and well-being of populations through disciplinary and interdisciplinary research activities.

4. OBJECTIVES

In compliance with the principles of ethics, dignity, and scientific integrity, the UICISA: E aims to:

- Develop research projects in nursing and health sciences, in co-creation with citizens, to support evidence-informed health policies and care;
- Advance nursing knowledge to improve the quality of nursing care;
- Promote the transfer of scientific knowledge in nursing and health sciences to advance evidence-based practice;
- Promote the link between research and the undergraduate and postgraduate programs offered by partner institutions;
- Train researchers from beginners to advanced levels;
- Promote the dissemination of scientific research;
- Promote a scientific and technological culture and citizen science, and carry out activities of particular relevance to society;
- Develop R&D projects on innovative technologies that improve the health and well-being of individuals;
- Provide research consulting services;
- Publish the Journal of Nursing Referência, promoting its dissemination and impact;
- Promote scientific exchange with other national and international research structures, including participation in networks and projects.

5. PRINCIPLES AND GUIDELINES

Ethics and scientific integrity: The R&D activities conducted at UICISA: E are governed by the principles of ethics and scientific integrity established by the European Code of Conduct for Research Integrity and the National Council of Ethics for the Life Sciences.

Equity: The UICISA: E supports the research activities of its members, safeguarding the principle of equity, according to the size and quality of the projects, their productivity, rigor, and frequency of activity and compliance reports.

Researchers' team: The UICISA: E team includes integrated researchers and collaborators from the Scientific Research Career, the Higher Education Faculty Career and others, as long as they meet the criteria defined by the FCT and the UICISA: E Scientific Committee. An integrated researcher is a researcher with a Ph.D. or the title of Aggregate, who, in both cases, must have a contract or relationship with a Portuguese institution and dedicate at least 20% of their working time to research activities in the R&D unit and on the national territory. They can only belong to a single R&D unit, namely the one where they carry out their main research activity, but they can collaborate in one or more R&D units. A collaborating researcher is a researcher who does not meet the criteria for integration. Every two years, the UICISA: E Scientific Committee defines the scientific merit criteria for becoming an integrated researcher or a collaborating researcher and publishes them in the Researcher's Guide.

Funding programs: The UICISA: E encourages teams to submit their projects to competitive funding calls from any national or international source. It is the responsibility of the management and participating institutions to provide the researcher in charge of each funded project with the necessary resources to manage the project scientifically and financially, to meet the expected productivity indicators, to prepare the reports required by the funding bodies, and to present them rigorously before audits.

Dissemination and image: The UICISA: E expands its brand through national and international activities using technical means of dissemination, through its presence in scientific venues and exhibitions, and through its website and social networks.

6. RESEARCH ORGANIZATION AND MANAGEMENT MODEL

6.1 Organization

The R&D activities at UICISA: E are organized into Thematic Lines (TLs), Structuring Projects (SPs), and Associated Study Projects (ASPs). They are guided by the following fundamental principles: Ethics, Scientific integrity, Internationalization, and Information management (e.g., productivity data).

The four TLs (Education and Disciplinary Development; Self-Care and Health-Disease; Well-being and Health Promotion; and Systems, Organization, Models and Technologies of Care) guide UICISA: E's research activities. Each TL includes several SPs, which extend over time and allow for the organization of research around a specific topic. The SPs provide structure and focus to UICISA: E's research activities on priority health research topics that are analyzed and defined by the UICISA: E Scientific Committee based on societal challenges and the recommendations of the ESEnC Board and the UICISA: E Scientific Council.

Each SP should include several ASPs, such as funded projects, doctoral projects, post-doctoral projects, and master's projects. ASPs are time-limited and require planning of the research process to have an impact on the production and application of scientific knowledge. The R&D activities of each ASP can include the generation, synthesis, transfer, and/or implementation/application of scientific knowledge throughout the life cycle and in various intervention contexts (health institutions, home, communities, schools, workplaces).

The development of projects is supported by the implementation of specific measures and specialized techniques and resources, i.e. the Strategic Axes: Evidence-Based Practice; Experimental and Applied Research in Health Care Technologies (TecCare); Edition and Dissemination of Scientific Knowledge; Researchers' Training and Pedagogical Innovation; and Extension and Citizen Involvement.

6.2 Management

The UICISA: E has the following management bodies: Scientific Coordination, Scientific Committee, Scientific Council, Administrative Committee, and External Advisory Committee.

6.2.1 Scientific Coordination

According to Article 69 of the ESEnC Statutes, the Scientific Coordinator of UICISA: E is appointed by the President of the ESEnC from among the Unit's Ph.D. researchers, after consulting the UICISA: E Scientific Council. The term of office of the Scientific Coordinator is four years, renewable for a maximum of two consecutive terms. The Scientific Coordinator can only be dismissed in case of a serious, culpable breach of his/her obligations.

- 1) The UICISA: E Scientific Coordinator shall:
 - a) Represent the UICISA: E in the other School's bodies and externally;
 - b) Appoint a Deputy Coordinator to assist him/her in the performance of his/her duties, to advise him/her, to replace him/her in the event of his/her absence or impediment, and to

- exercise other powers delegated to him/her by the Scientific Coordinator;
- c) Perform acts of ordinary administration on a permanent basis;
 - d) Approve the regulations necessary for the operation of the Unit;
 - e) Implement the deliberations of the Unit's Scientific and Administrative Committees when binding;
 - f) Prepare and submit to the School's president for approval the Unit's activity plan, which should include the estimated budget required for its implementation, as well as prepare the activity report;
 - g) Perform any duties delegated to him/her by the School's president or bodies;
 - h) Perform any other duties provided for by law or the statutes.
- 2) In addition to the competencies mentioned in Article 69 of the ESEnFC Statutes, the Scientific Coordinator shall:
- a) Assume all the responsibilities defined and regulated by the FCT with respect to the role of coordinator of an accredited and funded research unit;
 - b) Propose a representative of the collaborating researchers to the Scientific Council;
 - c) Appoint the Cluster Coordinators, after consulting the head of the participating institution or the person delegated for this purpose;
 - d) Submit the regulation for approval to the President of the main management institution (ESEnFC), after approval by the Scientific Council.

6.2.2. Scientific Committee

The Scientific Committee is composed of the UICISA: E Scientific Coordinator (who chairs the Committee), the UICISA: E Deputy Scientific Coordinator, the Cluster Coordinators, the TL Coordinators, and two researchers elected by the UICISA: E Scientific Council from among its members.

The Scientific Committee shall:

- a) Analyze issues related to the team and R&D activities presented by the UICISA: E Scientific Coordinator;
- b) Analyze and define the TLs, the UICISA: E/ESEnFC priority research topics, and the strategic

axes based on the societal challenges and the recommendations of the ESEnFC Board and the UICISA: E Scientific Council;

- c) Establish criteria for evaluating research projects;
- d) Give its opinion on the SPs submitted by the researchers;
- e) Establish and apply the criteria for the admission and exclusion of researchers from the status of integrated researcher and collaborating researcher;
- f) Give its opinion on the UICISA: E annual report;
- g) Appoint the coordinators of TLs and Strategic Axes at the proposal of the Scientific Coordinator;
- h) Analyze and determine the composition of the External Advisory Committee, after consulting the UICISA: E Scientific Council;
- i) Present any changes to this regulation to the Scientific Council;
- j) Approve the representative of the collaborating researchers on the Scientific Council proposed by the Scientific Coordinator;
- k) Give its opinion on the composition of the UICISA: E Ethics Committee.

The Scientific Committee shall meet every six months and extraordinarily whenever convened by the Scientific Coordinator, either in person or by videoconference.

6.2.3. Scientific Council

The Scientific Council is composed of the Scientific Coordinator, the UICISA: E integrated researchers (FCT records), and a representative of the collaborating researchers.

1) The Scientific Council shall:

- a) Approve the UICISA: E annual report;
- b) Give its opinion on the UICISA: E/ESEnFC priority research topics and strategic axes;
- c) Give its opinion on issues related to the R&D team and activities presented to it by the Scientific Coordinator;
- d) Give its opinion on the composition of the External Advisory Committee;
- e) Approve proposals from the Scientific Committee to amend this regulation;
- f) Elect two researchers from the FCT records to the Scientific Committee from among its members, for the duration of each program contract with the FCT.

2) Meetings of the Scientific Council

- a) Meetings shall be held in person or by videoconference twice a year in plenary session and extraordinarily at the request of the Scientific Coordinator or a group of at least 20% of its members.
- b) The Scientific Coordinator shall be responsible for convening the meetings. Meetings shall be called at least 48 hours in advance, except for meetings held for the purpose of elections, which must be called at least eight days in advance.
- c) Meetings shall be held, on the first call, with at least two-thirds of its members present and, on the second call, half an hour later, with any number of members present.
- d) Decisions shall be taken by a simple majority of the members present.
- e) Voting shall be by secret ballot upon the request of at least a quarter of the members present.
- f) In the case of a roll-call vote, the vote is secret.

6.2.4. Administrative Committee

The Administrative Commission is composed of the ESEnC President, who presides over it and is responsible for the ultimate administrative and financial management of UICISA: E, and the UICISA: E Scientific Coordinator and Deputy Scientific Coordinator.

6.2.5. External Advisory Committee

The External Advisory Committee is composed of five Ph.D. professors and must include two foreign researchers. This Committee shall be responsible for analyzing the functioning of the Unit. For this purpose, it shall issue written opinions on the annual activity plan and report to be submitted to the FCT.

7. ETHICS COMMITTEE

The Ethics Committee at the ESEnC's UICISA: E was created in 2004 to ensure that ethical standards are maintained in the research conducted and to rule on any ethical issues raised by ESEnC faculty and researchers. The Ethics Committee is composed of seven members, five of whom are external to the institution. Its members are appointed by the UICISA: E Coordinator, after the UICISA: E Scientific Committee has given its opinion, and their appointment must be approved by the ESEnC President. This Committee is duly regulated and guided by the principles of Decree-Law No. 80/2018 of October

15. The provisions in the regulation of this Committee shall be consistent with the UICISA: E Regulation and the ESEnFC Statutes.

8. JOURNAL OF NURSING REFERÊNCIA

The Journal of Nursing Referência is a peer-reviewed scientific journal published by UICISA: E/ESEnFC. This journal is indexed in a number of highly relevant national and international databases and networks (Scopus, SciELO Portugal, DOAJ, CINAHL via EBSCOHost, RCAAP, Latindex, Redalyc, ProQuest, ...).

The publication of this journal is the responsibility of the main management institution in collaboration with the UICISA: E Coordinator.

9. EXECUTIVE SECRETARIAT OF THE UICISA: E

The Unit has a secretariat responsible for its technical and administrative operation. The main management institution and the other management institutions provide the necessary technical and logistical support for this service.

10. FUNDING

The Unit has the following sources of funding:

- a) Allocations from the main management institution (ESEnFC and other management and participating institutions);
- b) Allocations from the FCT;
- c) Funding received from other public or private entities, whether national or foreign, such as funding for research fellowships and projects.

11. OTHER DOCUMENTATION

Other documentation that supports the development of R&D projects and activities:

- a) The Researcher's Guide;
- b) The Regulation for Research Initiation Rotations;
- c) The ESEnFC International Collaboration Protocol and procedures for the development of Advanced Research (AR) pathways at UICISA: E;
- d) The agreement between JBI and the Portugal Center for Evidence Based Practice (PCEBP): A

JBI Centre of Excellence;

- e) The TecCare Regulation for experimental and applied research in healthcare technologies;
- f) The Regulation of the UICISA: E Ethics Committee.

12. UICISA: E INVOLVED INSTITUTIONS AND CLUSTERS

According to its development policy, the UICISA: E, based at the ESEnC, can be extended to other higher education and healthcare institutions. Clusters are not autonomous entities. However, they enhance the local organization of researchers and R&D activities, as well as the development of regional wealth. They must comply with all the standards, rules, and procedures of the UICISA: E organization and management model.

The creation of clusters should meet the following criteria:

- a) the institution must have at least five Ph.D. researchers integrated into UICISA: E (FCT records);
- b) the institution must have the necessary conditions and resources to develop and promote research in line with the Unit's objectives;
- c) researchers must accept the established rights and obligations and commit themselves to the Unit's development strategy.

Clusters function as extensions of UICISA: E and adopt the name of the higher education institution hosting them (UICISA: E Cluster at the institution hosting it). They have administrative autonomy and manage their own revenues, without prejudice to the established regulatory principles.

Becoming a UICISA: E Cluster requires a cooperation agreement between the ESEnC and the participating institution.

The Coordinator of each cluster is a member of the UICISA: E Scientific Committee.

The researchers and coordinators of the clusters comply with all the procedures and obligations established by the UICISA: E Regulation regarding objectives, research organization, scientific coordination, productivity records, reports, and development plans.

13. FINAL PROVISIONS

Administrative and financial matters not provided for in this Regulation shall be decided by the UICISA: E Administrative Committee.

Matters relating to scientific research not provided for in this Regulation shall be decided by the UICISA: E Scientific Coordinator and the Scientific Committee.